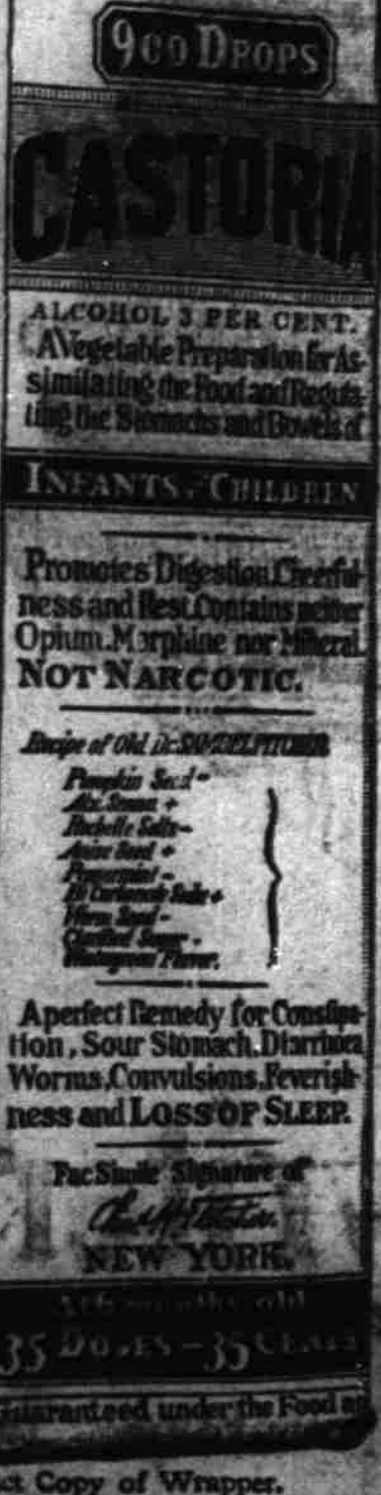


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FISHER HEARING

(Continued from Page 5)

they would be good for nothing.
Does the plantation own the water?

Yes.
How does it get the water?
The water rights are leased from a ranch beyond, who sells the water to them.

Would the homesteader be able to lease the water from that plantation?
I could not say. The water at the present time is under a considerable long lease to the plantation, and they could not get a right to the water unless the plantation were willing.

Fisher: Is there any other obstruction except that of water?

No.
What else could they grow there besides cane?

I don't know what else they could grow there unless it was cane.
Well, then, you have had no experience in homesteading cane land, or in the operation of cane lands, in small tracts by individuals?

Aiken: No, I have not been directly in touch with experiments elsewhere. I have always been in favor of Mr. Fairchild's plan. I do not believe that the Territory of Hawaii would benefit from the homesteading of cane lands. I am not interested in plantations—I have not even one share of sugar stock—but I do not believe that the cane business would be profitable in such small holdings, and have always felt as a land holder and an independent small farmer in the Territory that my prosperity and the prosperity of other small farmers depends upon the sugar industry being successful. I do not believe a small grower could grow cane successfully without the price of sugar being just right.

Ashford: Now, concerning this Haiku exchange and its devotion to homestead purposes—you have been familiar with that from the start, have you?

Aiken: Yes, sir.
Ashford: Can you say whether or not there was a plan to have that land devoted to homestead purposes in order to dispose of it to any particular people or class of people or group of people?

Aiken: Do you know of any plant?

Ashford: Yes.
Aiken: Simply at the time this exchange was talked about—the original negotiation was made with Mr. H. P. Baldwin.

Ashford: He was the owner, was he?

Aiken: Yes, sir. At that time a plan was then on foot to extend the railroad to Haiku. I believe Mr.

Baldwin made the statement that if we succeeded in placing a successful and desirable class of homesteaders upon that land he would see that the plantation themselves homesteaded a thousand acres more.

Ashford: Was there any talk at that time of placing that land at the disposal of any particular group of persons?

Aiken: None that I know of.

Ashford: How did it happen that this California Settlement Association was formed?

Aiken: I don't know, except I believe through the efforts of Mr. Starrett.

Ashford: Tell us who Mr. Starrett is.

Aiken: He is in charge of the marketing division of the Bureau of Agriculture.

Ashford: And was he connected with the government at the time of the inception of this plan?

Aiken: I don't think he was.

Ashford: What was his business or vocation at that time?

Aiken: I don't know.
He was not settled on the island?

No.

Was there any understanding with Mr. Starrett to the effect that if that land could be acquired by the government that he and his friends would have the opportunity of settling it, or it would be assigned to them?

Aiken: No; no such thing as that was thought of. Prior to its being acquired there was no understanding of that kind as to the parties to whom it should be assigned. Absolutely none.

Ashford: You have mentioned that there were a number of inquiries made of you regarding it. You mentioned particularly several young Portuguese. What were the nature of these inquiries?

They merely came to ask me when the land was to be cut up. It had not been surveyed at that time.

At the time that these inquiries were being made you were aware of no plan to devote it to parties not then within the Territory?

[Not in any definite way at all. We hoped we could get a class of settlers from away.]

What information, instructions or guidance did you give to these inquirers relative to the possibility of the land being opened?

Aiken: I referred them to this office here.

Ashford: Do you know a man named Nelson Koloe?

Aiken: I do.
Did he make inquiry?

He did. He stopped me one day at the station as I was going to Kahuiki and asked me about these lands being put up. I said that they had not been advertised, and that I knew nothing about what the plans were. In fact, I didn't know that the lands were to be put up until the very last. We were joking back and forth and I slapped him on the back and said, "We will be pretty hard up when we have homesteaders like you up there." Of course, this was just a joke between us.

Delegates on Immigration.
Ashford: The Delegate is entirely in favor of getting settlers from the mainland, but is not, of course, in favor of discretion in their favor as against residents of the Territory.

Ashford: Mr. Aiken, are you familiar with this land on the Lahaina side?

Yes.
Have you inspected the land itself?

Aiken: Not recently—not for a year or so.

Ashford: Have you inspected the lands at Hana?

Aiken: Not in particular; I have not gone over them in detail.

Fisher: Now with regard to the different classes or different methods of homesteading—how many methods of homesteading do you understand are available here on the islands?

Ashford: I think four now. One is the 999-year lease.

Describe that briefly.

A. I have had really nothing to do with it—of course I have read the statute several times. It is this—the occupants after staying a number of years on the land and complying with certain conditions as to cultivation, building, tree-planting, etc., and paying a very small commutation, may then take a lease for 999 years. I believe there is no rental whatsoever, practically a 1000 years' title with certain restrictions as to alienation—that is a point which I would have to look up in the statute book to refresh my memory. Then there is the freehold agreement. Well, that is a scheme where the land is put up at auction and then sold to the highest bidder, the purchaser, however, must have all the qualifications of a homesteader and is expected to pay not only the price of it at auction in that way, but be subject to all the restrictions and conditions in regard to residence thereon, tree planting, cultivation, non-alienation, etc., for a number of years—three or five, whatever it may be—after which he can get his title. The third form is the right of purchase lease, where the land is appraised by appraisers appointed by the government and that appraisal may be modified up or down by the Commissioner of Public Lands and if it be modified then in its modified form it will stand and usually if there is a revision it has been downward in this territory. Then the homesteader takes his land at that appraisal, goes upon it, lives and cultivates the necessary number of years up to 21. He need not apply for title up to 21 years, but in the meantime he has to pay a rental equal to 8 per cent per annum and complies with all the conditions. The fourth plan is what is called the special agreement. 10-year special agreement. I think that was a creation of Governor Frear's, entirely. I have complained a great deal of it in the past and complain of it still, although I think it has some justification now in view of the recent enactment by Congress, but it never seemed to me a desirable form of homesteading, but nevertheless there it is and it has been the favored form with this administration and in many instances this administration has insisted that it will deal only upon the ten-year agreement plan. That is a plan whereby the homesteader goes—there is an appraisal of value and the homesteader goes into possession and complies with the conditions, which are in general respects the same as the others. I would have to consult the special differences—and he cannot obtain title within ten years. Well, those are the four different schemes that have been attempted to be conducted side by side here. They have all been followed to some extent but the administration lately is drawing its influence largely to the special agreement plan.

Fisher: I understand you think the special 10-year agreement plan—it would be better if we didn't have it? Objected to?

A. Well, I don't think it is desirable from the standpoint of our homesteader. It harnesses him down to many conditions and if the object be to prolong the tenancy before the party can get title and do as they like, then that undoubtedly is the best adapted to that purpose, except the 999-year lease.

Q. Do you know of any of these conditions attached to the special agreement plan that imposes any conditions on the homesteader that really should be resented by a bona fide homesteader?

A. Well, take a 10 year resident or a five year resident. Given that, they provide for a patent after three years' residence.

Q. Do you really think that a man should be required to live on the land in order to get his title, in order to make sure that he is a bona fide homesteader?

Ashford: It strikes me that the original plan, three years under the right of purchase lease, is sufficient for a minimum.

Q. That is, you mean that—cultivate and conform to those conditions within that time, and it is hardly to be expected that a man will do that unless he is acting bona fide. There is not enough in it to tempt unless in exceptional cases—instances, exception locations, and exceptional facilities and areas, etc.

Q. Now, that will leave the other three. Do you think on those three plans should be eliminated?

A. I do not know that they should be eliminated, but I do think that the homesteader should have his choice, his free choice.

Q. You say the choice should be with the homesteader and not with the government.

A. Undoubtedly.

Q. You think it should be obligatory that the government should give the homesteader the choice?

A. I think there—It seems to me that any plan that was good enough for the Legislature and good enough for Congress should be obligatory on the administration.

Mr. Ivers Was Then Called on.

Mr. Fisher: Mr. Ivers, would you be willing to tell us a little something

of your experience—I understand you are in the sugar and general commission business.

Mr. Ivers: Yes.

Q. How extensively.

A. Well, I am connected with one of the agencies here that represents some 15 sugar plantations and one pineapple plantation.

Q. How long have you been connected with the sugar business here?

A. About 25 years.

Q. Have you been present at any previous sessions?

A. Yesterday.

Q. You understand the general question that I am trying to get information upon. I wish you would, in your own way, perhaps tell me what you think of the situation—the homestead situation? Then more especially what we ought to do with public lands here.

A. It is an extremely difficult proposition to decide. There has been a great deal of homesteading done in the Territory within the last two or three years. I know on one plantation represented by Brewer & Co., the Territory has—there has already been withdrawn about 4000 acres of cane land.

Q. What has been done with that land?

A. Over 3000 acres of that land was in cane in previous years. I think in these 3000 acres there was something in excess of 1000 homesteads. These various holdings are assigned and with the exception of a comparatively small area about which there is some dispute, practically all of that land is still in cane, but none by the original homesteaders.

Q. What happened to them—when they entered what did they do?

A. Well, some of them did really cultivate cane and a good many of the others, while ostensibly cultivating, really leased the land to others to do the cultivating.

Q. Were the homesteaders white or

A. There were a few whites, but most of them were Portuguese and Hawaiians.

Q. Is there any distinction as to the way in which the different nationalities or races handled their lands—did they—

A. There was no distinction as a general rule; that is, there are several Portuguese today who are still cultivating their lands.

Q. Were there some of them other than Portuguese.

A. Yes, there were.

Q. What happened to them?

A. After they acquired title they leased the lands to others who are cultivating the cane.

Q. Did they before they acquired title—did they themselves work on the lands?

A. The white people.

Q. The white people.

A. They employed others; they lived on the land but worked usually for the plantation and employed others to do their cultivating.

Q. Who did they usually employ?

A. Japanese, Chinese or Portuguese; but mostly Japanese.

Q. Now, how did the Hawaiian handle their homesteads in that respect?

A. Well, the Hawaiians, of course they cultivated a less area until they got their titles, and then they disposed of their lands.

Q. They sold the lands?

A. Yes.

Q. To whom did they sell?

A. In a good many cases to Japanese.

Q. The Japanese to whom they sold—were they citizens or aliens?

A. They were aliens.

Q. Now, in order to bring that result about, the homesteader would have to have some adequate assurance for full payment in the disposal of his cane?

A. Yes.

Q. What assurance do you think could be given?

A. Well, I think all the plantations—I think the majority of them are willing to enter into a fair contract.

Q. It was expressed by Mr. Swamy that he thought the plantations would be willing to enter into contracts for ten or fifteen years and take the price of sugar at Philadelphia, San Francisco or New York as the homesteader would know that he would be entitled to a certain fixed percentage of the raw sugar.

A. That is very true, those sort of contracts are being made very often.

Q. You think the plantation would be willing to adopt that sort of contract?

A. I am sure. The physical features of different plantations are very different. On some plantations cultivation is a comparatively small expense, while on others it is much larger, especially in wet districts, where the cultivation is a heavy expense and the transportation and manufacture are lighter. Therefore the plantation as a rule buys cane either standing or in the flume.

Q. There is no reason, then, under that system why the plantation would not be willing to pay a certain fixed price measured on the price of raw sugar?

A. Well, there is this reason. It might cost one plantation more—a great deal more than another.

Q. It might be that the manufacturer—the cost of manufacturing is greater on one than another. There is no reason why that plantation would not be willing to accept the system?

A. No.

Q. Now, what do you think of the question of competition in the manufacture of sugar? It was expressed here yesterday, I think by Mr. Ashford that in his judgment the homesteaders could rely upon the competitive facilities for their cane. Do you think that is true?

A. Well, Mr. Ashford made one statement that I did not quite agree with—in regard to Waiakea—that if all the lands were homesteaded that either the mill of the Oloa Sugar Company, the Hawaii Mill, or the Hilo Sugar Company could manufacture the sugar. As a matter of fact, there are none of these three mills that could handle all that crop, in addition to their own. Naturally there would not be very keen competition, and I

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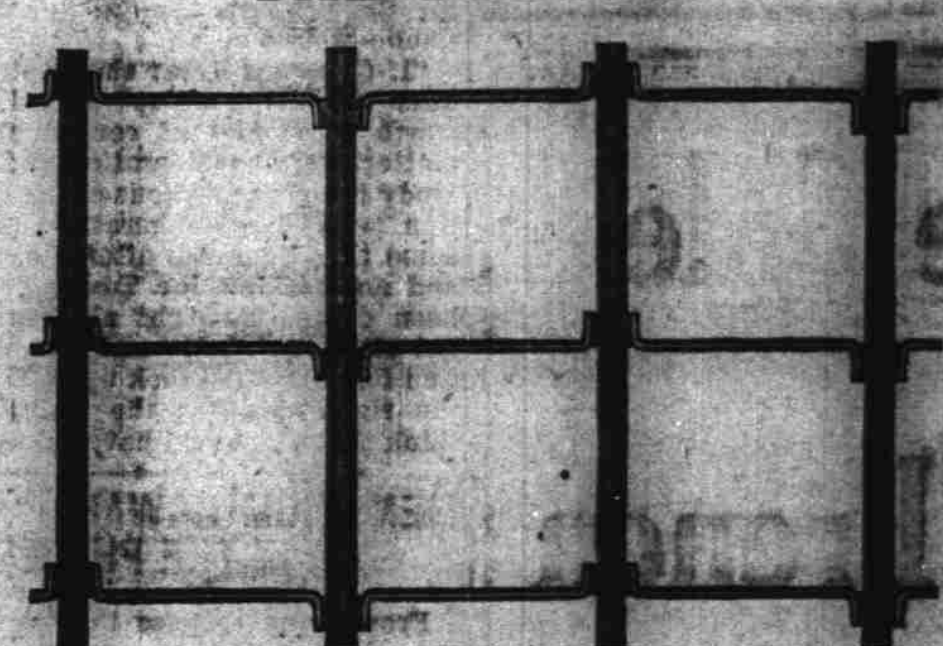
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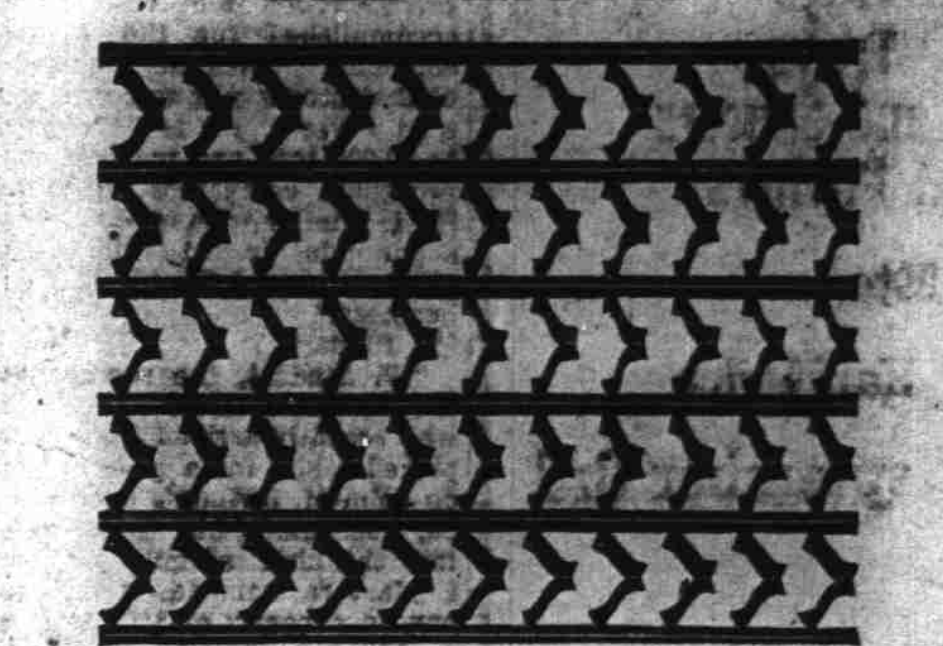
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do not think any one of those mills would remove them as a competitor could double the capacity without from the adjacent mill.

Q. There is some complaint in the papers that a small mill of a public character was in fact driven out of the field by the larger plantations which took the cane at a lower price until it got rid of the mill and then it raised the price. Have been unable to see what cure there would be for that. Do you see any?

A. I do not know that there is actual competition, I have never heard of this Territory of any agreement of a mill, would have adequate assurances that cane raised by mills as a whole would pay a certain price for cane. I do not think any such agreement exists.

Q. Generally speaking, transportation conditions usually determine the size of the mill, that in itself

provided the price is not prohibitive?

A. Yes, I think there is a great deal of misconception as to the profits that are made.

Q. We are told, for instance, that some plantation like Ewa plantation makes 12 or 14 per cent.

A. I know, but that 12 or 14 per cent. is a general rate. That does not come down to an acreage basis. If they make \$40 per acre for the entire acreage planted on an irrigated plantation that is doing very well. An irrigated plantation—that is some of the best of them—ought to make about twice that.

After this Mr. Ivers discussed conditions on Hawaii and Hawaii's labor, already referred to.

Evening notices are often outlined with a line of straws or rhinoceros.